

Remarks

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 9-12, 16-19, 21-24, 28, 29, 31-48, 38, 39, and 41-47 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over JP 01-120342 (hereinafter referred to as '342) in view of published United States patent application 2003/0184941 naming Maeda et al as inventors (hereinafter referred to as Maeda). In view of the Examiner's reliance on Maeda in making previous rejections of the claims in the first office action and the availability of antedating this reference, the Applicants have amended the claims. The Applicants respectfully request careful consideration of the explanations provided in support of traversing the Examiner's rejections of the claims.

With respect to the status of Maeda as prior art of the type within provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) (as applied in the rejections of claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 9-12, 16-19, 21-24, 28, 29, 31-48, 38, 39, and 41-47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)), the Applicants hereby file a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 establishing the invention of the subject matter of claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 9-12, 16-19, 21-24, 28, 29, 31-48, 38, 39, and 41-47 prior to March 13, 2003, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) filing date of Maeda. Because Maeda has been removed as a prior art reference by the attached Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131, the Applicants respectfully contend that a valid prima facie obviousness rejection of claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 9-12, 16-19, 21-24, 28, 29, 31-48, 38, 39, and 41-47 is not present. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 9-12, 16-19, 21-24, 28, 29, 31-48, 38, 39, and 41-47 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over '342 in view of Maeda be withdrawn.

Objection to Claims 3-5, 8, 13-15, 20, 25-27, 30, 35-37, and 40

The Examiner has objected to claims 3-5, 8, 13-15, 20, 25-27, 30, 35-37, and 40 as including allowable subject matter but dependent upon rejected claims. The Applicants respectfully request that the objections to claims 3-5, 8, 13-15, 20, 25-27, 30, 35-37, and 40 are held in abeyance until a decision is made upon the allowability of the claims from which these claims depend.

Conclusion

HP Docket Number 200309706-1

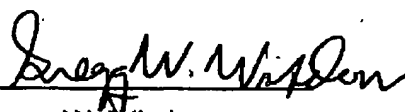
9

SN 10/685,322
Amendment B

The Applicants respectfully contend that the subject application is in a condition for allowance. Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

B. Mark Hirst et al

By 
Gregg W. Wisdom
Reg. No. 40,231

December 23, 2005
(360) 212-8052